

# News from the collections

## Ian Potter Foundation supports Tiegs Zoology Museum

The Ian Potter Foundation has generously provided a grant to the Tiegs Zoology Museum, which is part of the Department of Zoology in the Faculty of Science, to purchase new, museum-quality display cases. Additional funds are being contributed by a private donor and by the Zoology Department itself.

The Ian Potter Foundation, established in 1964, makes grants for general charitable purposes in Australia that advance knowledge and benefit the community in the areas of the arts, community wellbeing, education, environment and conservation, health, medical research and science. It has generously supported many of the University's collections over the years, including the Ian Potter Museum of Art, the University Library, the School of Physics Museum and now the Tiegs Zoology Museum.

When the Zoology Department moved from the Baldwin Spencer Building to its then-new building in 1989, there was not enough space to display all the interesting specimens in the Tiegs collection. Now additional space has been made available, to accommodate new showcases and enable the Tiegs

Museum to exhibit specimens which have not been on general display for the last 20 years, such as a lion skeleton and a mounted wedge-tailed eagle. In this way these generous donations of funds will bring about a significant and lasting improvement in the quality of exhibits. For more information on the Tiegs Museum see [www.zoology.unimelb.edu.au/tiegs/](http://www.zoology.unimelb.edu.au/tiegs/)

## Ursula Hoff Internship

On 9 October 2009 the Ian Potter Museum of Art announced the awarding of the inaugural Ursula Hoff Internship, to Ms Stacie Bobele.

Dr Ursula Hoff AO OBE was born in London in 1909 and died in Melbourne in 2005. Her distinguished career encompassed art history, curatorship and museum management, both at the University of Melbourne and the National Gallery of Victoria. From 1975 to 1984 she was London advisor to the Felton Bequest. Educated in Hamburg, Munich and London, she was among the pivotal first generation of European-trained art historians who introduced the subject to Australian universities. Her significant legacy includes the development of the collection of prints and drawings at the National Gallery of Victoria, now one of the finest in the world.

This internship was established under the terms of Dr Hoff's bequest, in order to promote the study and promotion of prints held in the print collections of the University of Melbourne and the National Gallery of Victoria. Ms Bobele will research prints made by the Bauhaus artist Ludwig Hirschfeld Mack (1893–1965), many of which are held in the University of Melbourne Art Collection at the Ian Potter Museum of Art.



**Opposite:** Norman Wodetzki, Queensberry Photography, Dr Ursula Hoff, on the occasion of being admitted to the degree of Doctor of Laws *honoris causa* at the University of Melbourne, on 10 December 1983. Photographic print, 18.5 x 14.5 cm. UMA/I/2310, University of Melbourne Archives.

**Below:** Mortar and pestle, Chinese, Qing Dynasty, c.1870s. Medical History Museum, University of Melbourne. This item was purchased by Professor Emeritus Sir Douglas Wright (1907–1990), former Dean of the Faculty of Medicine and Chancellor of the University of Melbourne, while travelling with his wife in China in 1971. It was donated to the Museum by Lady Wright in 1992. Although designed as a practical tool for the grinding of herbs, form and function have been marvellously combined to achieve great elegance of design.

## New medical curator

Following the retirement of Ms Ann Brothers, the Medical History Museum has appointed Susie Shears as curator. Ms Shears has over 25 years' experience in museums and galleries, and comes to the University from the Victorian Tapestry Workshop where she was Director from 2004 to 2008. She has also worked at the National Gallery of Victoria, as Curator and then Director of the Geelong Art Gallery, as Manager of Design and Development in the Philatelic Group at Australia Post, and manager of the Australian Pavilion at the 1995 Venice Biennale.

The temporary closure of the Medical History Museum during refurbishment of the Brownless Biomedical Library is providing the opportunity for an upgrade of the collection database and other collection management and curatorial work which will result in a greater emphasis on outreach and collection access. Research inquiries will continue during the closure. The Museum is scheduled to re-open in March 2010 with an exhibition exploring the traditional tools of the apothecary, including highly decorative apothecary jars, mortars and pestles, rare books illustrating medicinal herbs and their applications



and botanical specimens. All the exhibits are from University of Melbourne collections.

## School of Physics Museum official launch

In April the School of Physics held an official 'opening' for its museum. It may seem unusual to open something that has been around for a while, but the School felt that it was time to formally acknowledge the efforts of Associate Professor Ed Muirhead, former Chair of the School of Physics, and others in preserving the School's historic record through this unique collection of historical artefacts, photographs and

documents. In his address, Vice-Chancellor Professor Glyn Davis highlighted many of the School's achievements, and warmly welcomed back many alumni and former staff and associates, including Miss Betty Laby, whose father, Professor Thomas H. Laby (1880–1946), led Physics at Melbourne for nearly 30 years and whose sister, the late Dr Jean Laby, was also a physicist at Melbourne. The Vice-Chancellor praised the work of Dr Muirhead who for some 20 years supervised the cataloguing and care of the collection. Contributions from staff including Nick Nicola and Phil Lyons were also acknowledged, as was the generous

Mrs Fiona Caro and Professor David Caro AO OBE (former Head of School of Physics, Dean of Science, and Vice-Chancellor 1982–1987) with other guests at the opening of the School of Physics Museum in April.



support provided over the years by the Russell and Mab Grimwade Miegunyah Fund, the Ian Potter Foundation, the University's Cultural Collections Committee and the Friends of the Physics Museum.

### ***Tipitaka* presented to Library**

The University of Melbourne is the first institution in Australia to receive a Romanised edition of the Buddhist Pali canon, or *Tipitaka*. A delegation from the Dhamma Society, a charitable organisation with Thai Royal patronage, presented the 40 volumes in a colourful and formal ceremony in the beautiful Gryphon Gallery in the 1888 building on 21 October. The Chancellor, The Hon. Alex Chernov AO QC, accepted the gift on behalf of the University.

The *Tipitaka* is the earliest surviving collection of scriptures in the Theravada Buddhist tradition, which were committed to writing from an oral tradition during the early years of Buddhism (first century BCE) in the Pali language in what is now Sri Lanka. The scriptures were first printed in the 19th century and a copy of that 1893 edition was presented to the University in 1895 by a representative of His Majesty King Chulalongkorn of Siam (now Thailand), and preserved in the Special Collections of the Baillieu

Library. In 1999 the Dhamma Society began rendering the scriptures into Roman script. The project was completed in 2005, and the books are now being ceremonially presented at various locations around the world, to assist and enhance studies of Buddhist teachings.

### **Cultural Connotations Art Curatorship Award**

The winner of the inaugural Cultural Connotations Art Curatorship Award, granted to the student who ranked first overall in the first year of the two-year Master of Art Curatorship program, was announced recently. The winner, Ms Chelsea Harris, commenced her course in 2007, and received an overall first class average during the first year. She recently travelled in Europe, especially Poland, researching public programs in museums in preparation for her thesis in 2010.

The Director of Cultural Connotations, Ms Annette Welkamp, presented the award in a ceremony at the Ian Potter Museum of Art in July. Ms Welkamp is an alumna of the University of Melbourne and her consultancy firm develops, implements and manages creative, cultural and heritage projects.

The Master of Art Curatorship Program (School of Culture and

Communication, Faculty of Arts), celebrates its 20th anniversary in 2010. Many of its students participate in the Cultural Collections Student Projects Program. Its alumni have gone on to work with museums, art galleries and other collecting organisations across Australia and internationally.

### **The perfect Christmas gift**

The cultural collections feature on the University's desk calendar for 2010. Fascinating artefacts, illustrations and artworks from the Grainger Museum, University Art Collection, Earth Sciences Library Rare Book Collection, Classics and Archaeology Collection, Harry Brookes Allen Museum of Anatomy and Pathology, Rare and Historic Maps Collection, Baillieu Library Print Collection, University of Melbourne Archives and the Medical History Museum illustrate this handy CD-size calendar. It makes an excellent gift which lasts until February 2011, and is available from the Melbourne University Bookshop for \$16.00. University staff can make bulk purchases of 20 units by emailing [c.garrivan@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:c.garrivan@unimelb.edu.au).